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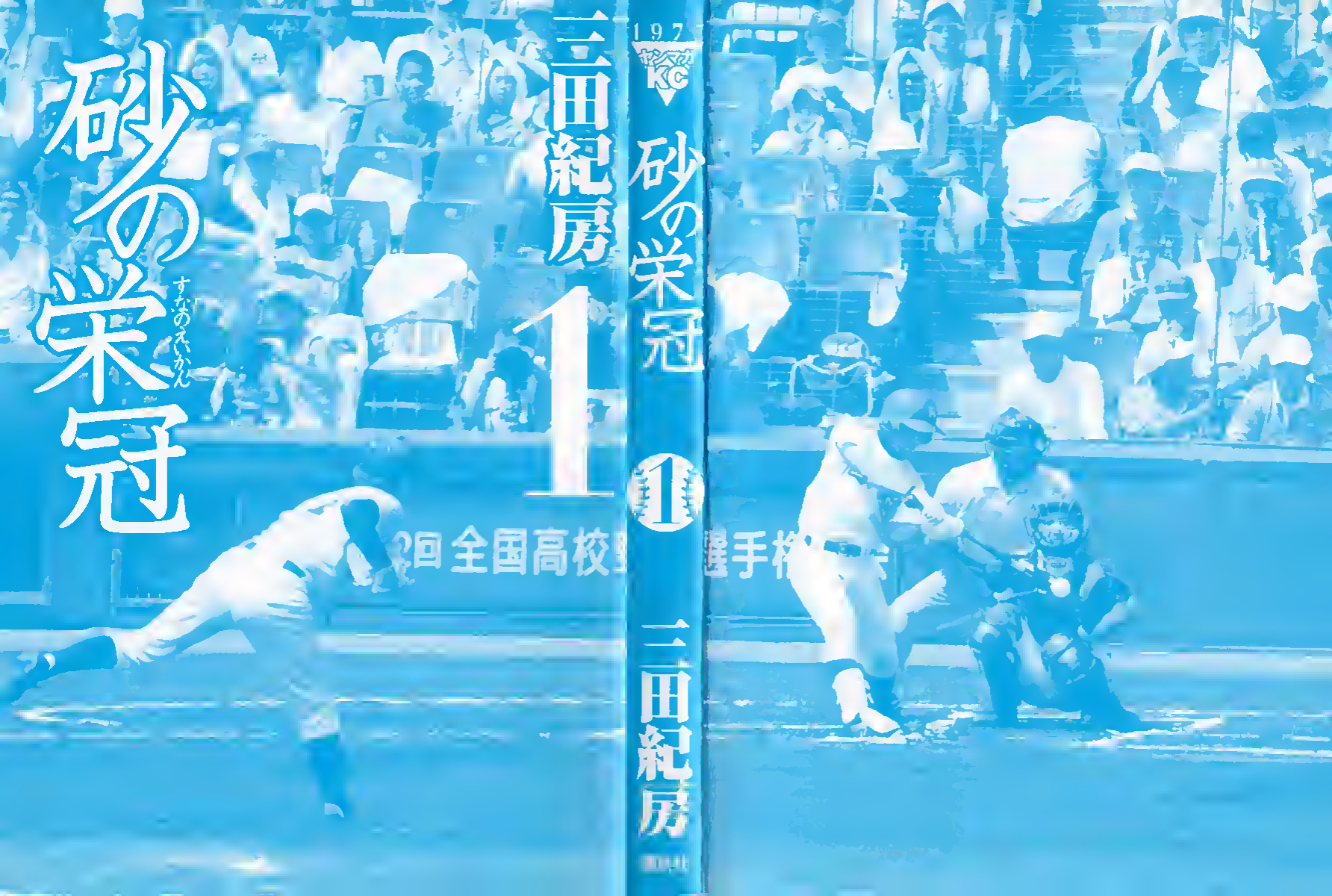
講談社

LAURELS OF SAND

WITH 10 MILLION YEN, TO KOSHIEN.

TO THE FIRST KOSHIEN APPEARANCE ON THE SCHOOL'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY.



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三田紀房

SUNA NO EIKAN

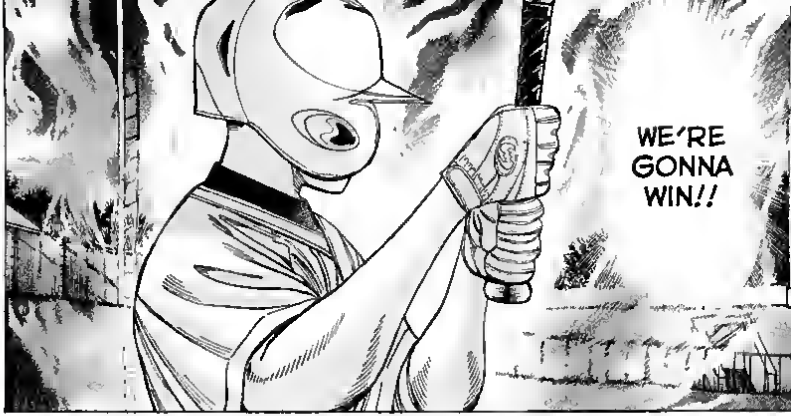
PRESENTED BY:
PLAY BALL SCANS

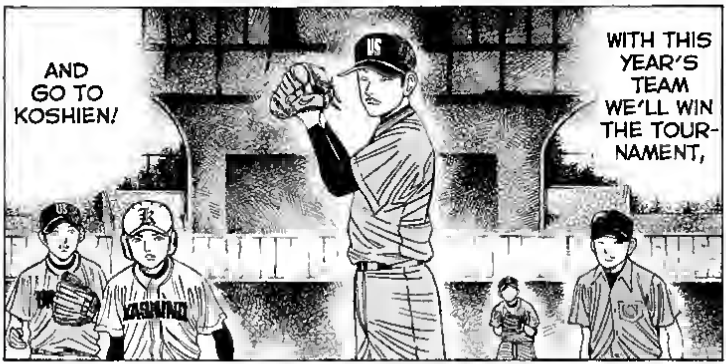
CHAPTER 1

TRANSLATOR: VICTORIEL
EDITOR: MOON_BLITZ
PROOFREADER: BASEBALLBIRDSCHOOL
TYPESETTER: NAIVCHAN

PLAY-BALL-SCANS.TUMBLR.COM

Ch 1: The 100-Year Dream


WE'RE GONNA WIN!!


AND GO TO KOSHIEN!
WITH THIS YEAR'S TEAM WE'LL WIN THE TOUR-NAMENT,

IN ORDER TO DO THAT,

I'LL TURN THE GAME AROUND WITH THIS ONE HIT,

WIN, AND GO TO KOSHIEN!
SFX: UOOO-WAA

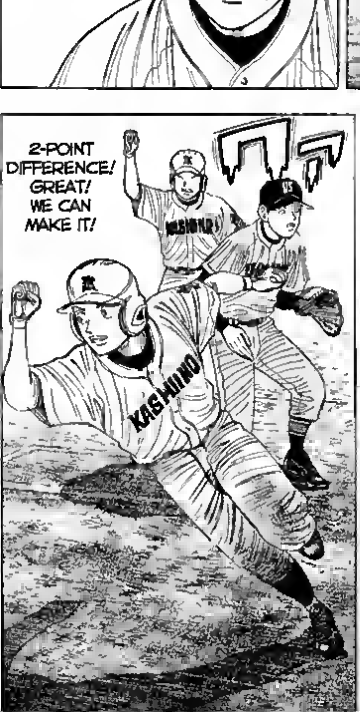
IN THE TOP OF THE 7TH, KASHINO HIGH FINALLY TURNS THE GAME AROUND 4-3!

THEY'VE HAD MULTIPLE OBSTACLES WHILE THEY WERE BEHIND, BUT THEY'VE SNATCHED AWAY THE LEAD HERE!

THE ONE WHO MADE THIS BIG 3-BASE HIT IS
THE 5TH BATTER, SHORTSTOP NANASHIMA!!

THANKS, NANA-SHIMAaa!
NANASHIMA! NICE BATTING!

NOW NAKAMURA-SAN CAN BE AT EASE


2-POINT DIFFERENCE! GREAT! WE CAN MAKE IT!
KAGUMO

AT A WILD PITCH, NANASHIMA RUNS FROM THE THIRD BASE TO HOME!

ワァァ
THEY MADE ONE STEP FORWARD TO THEIR DREAM OF THEIR FIRST CHAMPION-SHIP!
IN THE FINALS OF THE SUMMER SAITAMA TOURNAMENT, PREFECTURAL HIGH SCHOOL KASHINO, WITH A LONG-CHERISHED DREAM OF THEIR FIRST KOSHIEN APPEARANCE, TURNS THE GAME AROUND IN THE 7TH INNING 5-3!
ワァァ
WITH THEIR PRIDE AS THE CHAMPIONS ON THE LINE, CAN THEY TAKE THE LEAD FOR THE SECOND TIME?
THEIR OPPONENTS ARE IRAWA SHUIGAKU, WHO ARE EAGER TO GO TO KOSHIEN 2 YEARS IN A ROW, FOR THE 9TH TIME
ワァァ
ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SCHOOL'S FOUNDATION, WILL THEY BE ABLE TO ENGRAVE INTO HISTORY THE HONOUR OF A FIRST KOSHIEN APPEARANCE? STUDENTS AND ALUMNI ARE EAGERLY WAITING FOR THAT MOMENT!
ON THE THIRD BASE SIDE, KASHINO'S HUGE CHEERING SQUAD BURST INTO UPROAR!

DEFINITELY STOP THEM!!!
NAKAMURA-a DO YOUR BEST!
Certain Victory
YES...
Certain Victory
ENDOU-SAN, CAN YOU GO FETCH WATER WITH THIS BUCKET?
HEY...
TOKU-SAN
Certain Victo
AH...

心肺
WE'LL... DEFINITELY WIN
I SEE... IT'S HOT SO PLEASE DON'T FORCE YOURSELF
I'M TAKING A BREAK SINCE THEY TOOK THE LEAD...
YES... ABSOLUTELY

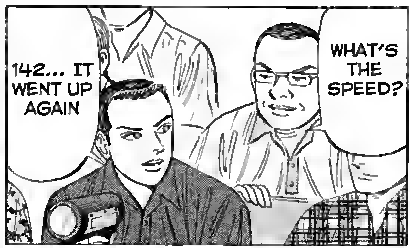
KASHINO'S ACE NAKAMURA HAS BEEN PITCHING QUITE A BIT.
KASHINO
WILL IT GO WELL FOR KASHINO?
NO.... I DON'T THINK IT WILL BE EASY FOR THEM.
HE PITCHED COMPLETE GAMES IN ALL 6 MATCHES BEFORE, AND TODAY IS HIS 3RD DAY IN A ROW.
HIS EXHAUSTION IS AT ITS PEAK, AND A 2 POINT DIFFERENCE ISN'T A SAFE LEAD
IF HE THROWS WITH ALL HIS MIGHT, HE'LL HAVE ENOUGH TO MAKE IT TO THE END.
WELL.... NAKAMURA IS MENTALLY TOUGH
BOTH OF THEM HAVE HANDLED HIGH PRESSURE GAMES SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL
AND THEY ALSO HAVE THE CATCHER, MATSUMOTO. HE FORMED A BATTERY WITH NAKAMURA, AND TOGETHER IN THEIR 3RD YEAR AT KASHINO MIDDLE SCHOOL THEY BECAME THE CHAMPIONS OF THE PREFECTURE.

THESE PLAYERS CAME TOGETHER UNDER THE MOTTO "BRING LOCAL KASHINO TO KOSHIEN", AND THIS TIGHT UNION HAS BECOME THE TEAM'S BACKBONE.
IN ADDITION, THERE IS CENTER-FIELDER HIRANO, AND SHORTSTOP NANASHIMA, WHO IS ONE YEAR YOUNGER. THEY WERE ALSO MEMBERS OF THE KASHINO MIDDLE SCHOOL'S CHAMPION TEAM.
IF THEY MISS THIS PERFECT CHANCE, THEY WON'T HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY FOR ANOTHER 100 YEARS, SO THEY'VE SET THEIR SIGHT ON THIS YEAR AND STRENGTHTENED THE TEAM.
AND IT'S THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SCHOOL'S FOUNDATION.
YEAH.... SINCE HE'S ONE OF THE BEST PUBLIC COACHES AND HAS APPEARED AT KOSHIEN 3 TIMES.
IS THIS ALSO WHY THEY ASKED THE PREFECTURE TO CALL SOGABE-SAN AS THEIR COACH?
FOR THIS GAME, THEY GATHERED EVERYONE AND SENT OUT A HUGE CHEERING SQUAD BUT THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION COMPLAINED THAT TRAVELLING EXPENSES WERE TIGHT BECAUSE OF THAT
ANYWAY THE SCHOOL, GRADUATES' ASSOCIATION, AND BASEBALL CLUB ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ARE ALL DESPERATE

KASHINO
KASHINO FINALLY TURNED THE GAME AROUND! BOTTOM OF THE 7TH, HOW WILL NAKAMURA PITCH IN THIS IMPORTANT INNING?!

NAKAMURA PUT ALL OF HIS SPIRIT INTO THIS FASTBALL!

KOSHI


WHAT'S THE SPEED?
142... IT WENT UP AGAIN

WE'LL HAVE TO GET COMMENTS FROM THE SCOUTS IN THE STANDS LATER
THERE ARE 8 PRO BASE-BALL TEAMS HERE TODAY

QUICK REACTION TO A STRONG HIT! FINE PLAY FROM NANASHIMA!
KASHINO
3

NICE PLAY, NANA-SHIMA-KUN!
KASHI
THAT 2ND YEAR SHORTSTOP IS QUITE GOOD WE SHOULD KEEP AN EYE ON HIM NEXT YEAR
TAKE-CHAN FROM HIROSHIMA WILL LIKELY HAVE AN INTEREST IN HIM
YEAH... WELL...
THE PRESSURE IS ABOUT TO BECOME SEVERE.
BECAUSE .... THEY SHOULDER THE HOPE FOR THEIR FIRST KOSHIEN ON THE SCHOOL'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY
KASHIN
8 MORE OUTS...
HIT THEM ALL TO ME! I'LL GET ALL OF THEM!

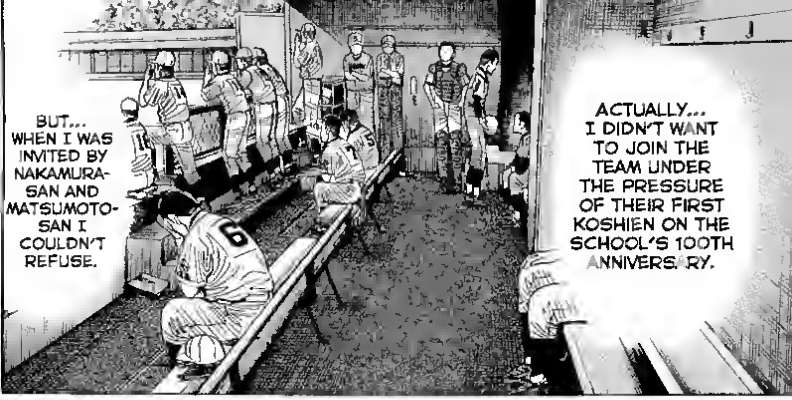
KOSHINO DREAM 100 BASE BALL CLUB
ALUMNI PRESIDENT
President of graduates' association
YOSHIWARA KUNIO
I GOT THEM TO START PREPARING THE HOTEL'S BANQUET HALL FOR A VICTORY CELEBRATION... IT SHOULD WORK OUT SOMEHOW
President of Kashino's baseball club's alumni association
NAGASAWA KATSUTOSHI
I INVITED THE MAYOR TO THE VICTORY CELEBRATION, SO ABOUT THE CELEBRATORY SPEAKERS' TURNS...
HELLO.
AH OKAY! ANYWAY LET'S GO ALL OUT!
AH... THE HOST IS FROM THE "SENDING TO KOSHIEN ASSOCIATION", SO ASK THERE...
YEAH... I'M SORRY WE'VE MADE YOU WAIT FOR SO LONG. FORGET YOUR TROUBLES AND ENJOY IT!
AFTER ALL, WE'VE WAITED THIS LONG FOR KOSHIEN, SO LET'S SEND EVERYTHING WE'VE ACCUMULATED UNTIL NOW OUT ALL AT ONCE!

NAKA-MURA-SAN, FIGHT!
NICE PITCHING, NAKA-MURA!
1

KOSHINI

BOTTOM OF THE 7TH. NAKAMURA LET A RUNNER GET ON BASE BUT PREVENTED THEM FROM SCORING.
HE CONTI-NUES HIS DO-OR-DIE POWERFUL PITCHING!

I DEFINITELY WOULDN'T WANT TO PITCH IN THAT SITUATION
NAKAMURA-SAN.... YOU'RE PITCHING REALLY WELL UNDER THIS HEAVY PRESSURE.


BUT... WHEN I WAS INVITED BY NAKAMURA-SAN AND MATSUMOTO-SAN I COULDN'T REFUSE.
ACTUALLY... I DIDN'T WANT TO JOIN THE TEAM UNDER THE PRESSURE OF THEIR FIRST KOSHIEN ON THE SCHOOL'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY.

BUT NAKAMURA-SAN IS DIFFERENT. HE'S EARNESTLY TRYING TO FULFILL THE 100-YEAR DREAM OF THE BASEBALL CLUB ALUMNI, GRADUATES' ASSOCIATION, AND KASHINO'S CITIZENS.
I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE SCHOOL OR ALUMNI, I DON'T PLAY BASEBALL FOR THAT.
KASHIN

AMAZING... IT'S ADMIRABLE. IT'S TOTALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME.
FROM THE MOMENT KASHINO MIDDLE SCHOOL BECAME THE CHAMPIONS OF THE PREFECTURE THIS PERSON DECIDED HIS FATE.
KASHINO

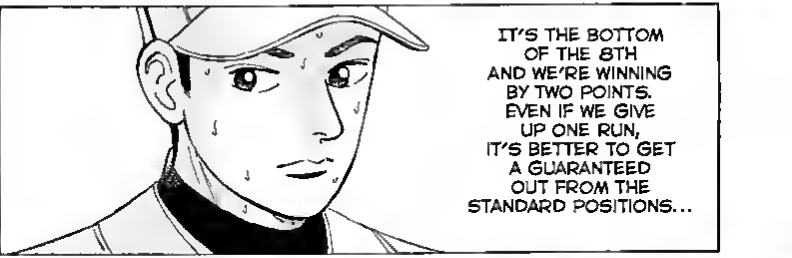
"I'M GONNA WIN AND LIVE UP TO THEIR EXPECTATIONS". THE STRENGTH OF THIS BELIEF IS SHOWN IN HIS PITCHING.
THAT'S WHERE NAKAMURA-SAN'S MENTAL STRENGTH IS.
THEN HE'LL BE RELEASED FROM ALL THIS PRESSURE
2 MORE INNINGS .... 6 MORE OUTS....
THE SCHOOL, BASEBALL CLUB ALUMNI... EVERYONE BELIEVES THAT NAKAMURA-SAN WILL DO IT. EVERYBODY COMPLETELY RELIES ON HIM.
HE TAKES THIS WISH ON HIMSELF AND CONTINUES TO PITCH CALMLY AND DIRECTLY.

AND WE'LL SUPPORT HIM BY DEFENDING WITH ALL OUR STRENGTH
FINALLY, THE GRAND SUM. WITH ALL OF HIS FEELINGS OF THE LAST 3 YEARS, NAKAMURA-SAN WILL PITCH UNTIL THE LAST BALL THAT DECIDES THE GAME.

1 OUT, RUNNERS ON SECOND AND THIRD! IN THE BOTTOM OF THE 8TH, URAWA SHUUGAKU INCREASES THEIR CHANCE RIGHT AWAY.
THE LAST OBSTACLE TO THEIR FIRST KOSHIEN APPEARANCE LIES IN FRONT OF KASHINO.
必勝

THERE IS STILL THE 9TH INNING AHEAD....
NOW IS THE MOMENT THAT WILL DECIDE OUR FATE. WE SHOULD TAKE OUR TIME AND BE CAREFUL.
KASHINO
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE ROAST BEEF? IDIOT! THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT NOW!
PR-... PRESIDENT...
必勝
GOD ...

TO PULL THE INFIELD IN
COACH SAID
LET THEM HIT!
IT'S FINE, NAKAMURA-SAN!
HE MEANS TO NOT GIVE THEM EVEN 1 RUN?
EH....


IT'S THE BOTTOM OF THE 8TH AND WE'RE WINNING BY TWO POINTS. EVEN IF WE GIVE UP ONE RUN, IT'S BETTER TO GET A GUARANTEED OUT FROM THE STANDARD POSITIONS...

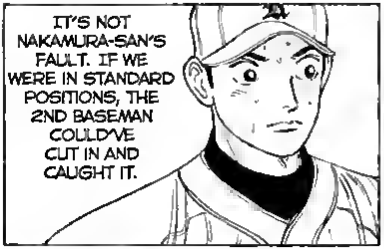
ON A GROUNDER, PICK OFF THE RUNNERS AND THEN THROW TO 1ST BASE. IF THE BALL DIVES DEEP, THROW BACK HOME
OKAY! LET'S GO!

EH.... YOU'LL JUST GO IN A HURRY LIKE THAT?
KASHI
BE SURE THAT WE'LL DEFEND AT ANY COST, AND PITCH!
NAKAMURA, STAY STRONG! ATTACK!
RETURN TO YOUR POSITION
YOU,
AH... NAKA-MURA-SAN
THAT'S BAD. WAIT ...
KASHIMA

BECAUSE THEY WANT A BREAK FROM THE PRESSURE OF 100 YEARS SOONER ...
THEY WANT IT TO END SOONER,
THEY'RE TOO IMPATIENT. THE DUGOUT AND EVERYONE HERE TOO...
NO... THAT CAN'T BE.
COULD IT BE THAT NAKAMURA-SAN FEELS THE SAME TOO?
KASHINO PULLED THE INFIELD IN! THEY'RE DETERMINED TO NOT GIVE UP EVEN ONE MORE RUN!

HIS PITCH-ING PACE IS TOO FAST!
AH!
NAKA-MURA'S FIRST PITCH!
6
NAKAMURA-SAN! IT CAN'T BE...
NO WAY!
1

IN FRONT OF THE CENTER FIELDER! RUNNER AT 3RD REACHES HOME! 5-4! URAWA SHUUGAKU IS DOWN ONLY BY ONE RUN!

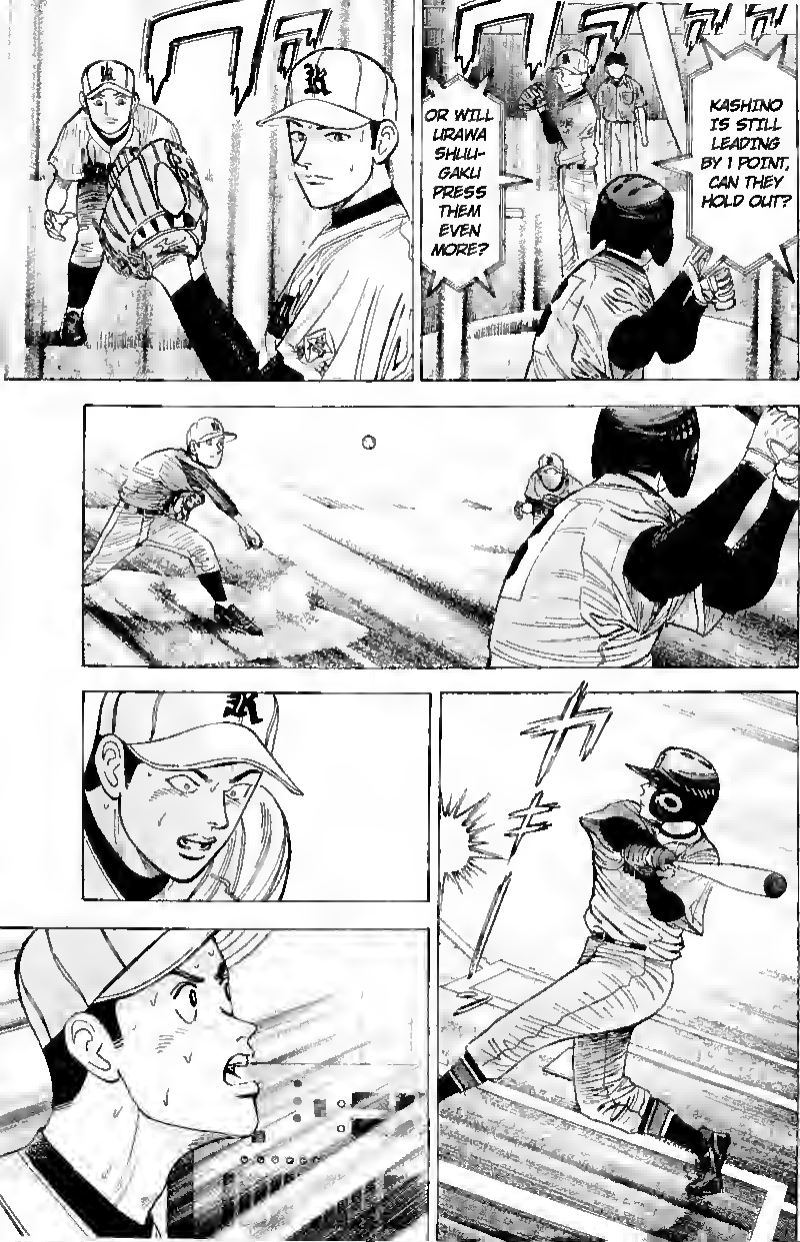


*COACH SOGABE'S NICKNAME

SO THAT'S IT....
NAKAMURA-SAN.... THIS IS HIS LIMIT ....
HE WAS FIGHTING INSIDE AGAINST THE 100 YEAR PRESSURE, AND HE ENDURED IT TO HIS LIMIT AND CONTINUED TO PITCH....
NAKAMURA-SAN... WITH THIS ONE BALL... .....
KASHINO
IT'S ALRIGHT, NAKAMURA-SAN, WE'RE STILL WINNING BY 1 POINT.
EH....

AND FINALLY THE WALL IN HIS HEART WAS BROKEN .....

WE ALL .... CAN'T ASK NAKAMURA-SAN TO "DO HIS BEST" ANYMORE THAN THIS
MATSU-MOTO-SAN IS LOST FOR WORDS TOO.
ALL THE INFIELDERS TOO...


OR WILL URAWA SHUU-GAKU PRESS THEM EVEN MORE?
KASHINO IS STILL LEADING BY 1 POINT, CAN THEY HOLD OUT?

THE BALL PASSED BETWEEN CENTER AND RIGHT FIELD!

URAWA SHUUGAKU TURNS THE SCORE!

RUNNER ON 3RD COMES HOME! FOLLOWING THE TIE RUNNER, RUNNER ON 1ST ALSO REACHES HOME!

I WONDER IF I CAN CANCEL THE BANQUET HALL....
IS IT HOPE-LESS? ... MAYBE IT'S THE END
NO, WRONG!
IT'S NOT OVER YET!

WE'LL TURN THE GAME ONCE AGAIN AND WIN!
DON'T GIVE UP! FACE FORWARD!
LET'S ATTACK FROM HERE!
SWITCH GEARS!